THE MINISTER OF CIVII. AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) to (c) Pawan Hans Limited entered into an agreement With M]s Westland Helicopters of UK, for purcnase of 21 Westiand helicopters at a cost of Pound 65 million. The entire cost of Pound 65 million was covered under an outright grant given by British Government under D.D.A. Grant The manufacturers also paid a onetime lumsum operation subsidy of Pound 10 million tor purchase of ais spare engines and accessories.

At a result of problems faced duriag operational performance, the entire fleet of Westland helicopters was finally grounded on 9-2-91 for reasons of operational safety and economic viabilily.

The total maintenance cost incurred to date is Ki. 34.9 crore*.

(d) A report of the Committee constit uted to examine various aspects of the! purchase deal is available in Parliament Library with S. No. 358-418 R. The Committee report does not call for dis ciplinary action against any official.

(e) Earlier, it had been decided *to*
dispose the entire fleet through global tenders but since no bids were received] by the prescribd date, it has now been decided to dispose these helicopters th rough negotiations with parties inter est in purchase of these helicopters and accessories.

Air India flight from New Delhi to Frank, furt

368. DR BAPU KALDATE: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

fa) the total Air India flights from New Delhi to fiirt and back duiinj April, 1994;

the total number of passengers car-

ried by Air India stating the nereeanion caracitj utilsition: and

(c) what are the reasons ror uo ww fall in the passenger traffic on Air India on this route?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) and (b) Daring April, 1994 Air India operated 51 flights on the India|Franlcfurt]India see-tor and carried 6522 passengers. The capacity utilisation during the month was 35 per cent against the target of average capacity utilisation of 63-2 per cent.

(c) The reasons for shortfall in capacity utilisation are :

(i) traffic is usually low during the . month of April;

(ii) competition by foreign Carriers.

Selling of Tickets at Discount by foretes Airlines

369. SHRI GHUFRAN AZAM: Wrs the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state;

(a) whether Government are aw that foreign airlines operating front I*-dia are selling tickets at discount raMs without the prior approval of the DGCA;

(b) if so, the number of such cates that came to the notice of GovernmefM during the past 6 months;

(c) whether Government propose contemplate any strict action in sard;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the impact of such concession offer by foreign airlines on our airline*?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) to (e) In Tune, 1994, The Board of Airline Represea- fatives of India represented to DGCA that some foreign airlines operating from India particularly (he European carrier

were indulging on slariff undercounting in contravention of the Aircraft Rules, 1937. Such under-cutting adversely affects the business of our national carriers. A meeting of all foreign operators was convened by DGCA on 8-7-1994 to discuss this issue and all operators were advised to strictly follow the relevant provisions of the Aircraft Rules. 1937 regarding fixation and charging of tariffs. A team has also been constituted by the Directol General of Civil Aviation with a representative of Reserve Bank of India to go through the financial records of airlines and their agents from time to detect undercutting of fares.

Death of Governor of Punjab and Himachal Pradesh in ah- crash

370. SHRI GHUFRAN AZAM:
DR. BAPU KALDATE:
SHRIMATI KAMALA SINHA:
SHRI VIRENDRA KATARIA:
SHRI SATYA PRAKASH MALAVIYA:
SHRI ANANT RAM JAISWAL:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have ordered an equiry into the air crash in which Governor of Punjab and Himachal Pradesh with his family and other crew members were killed recently,

(b) if so. whether any preliminary in-vestigations have been conducted;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) wnteher the Union Government propose to examine the worthiness of the plane with each of the State Government;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) what steps have been taken for the bereived family Members of the late Governor of Punjab and the crew members?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI OHU-, LAM NABI AZAD): (a) to (c) The accident is under investigation by an Inspector of Accidents appointed by the Director General of Civil Aviation Under Rule 71 of the Aircraft Rules, 193T. The Government also propose to appoint i a Court of Inquiry headed by a sitting Judge of the High Court of Himachal: Pradesh to investigate the accident under Rule 75 of Aircraft Rules, 1937.

(d) and (e) The State Government aircraft are maintained, inspected and certified in accordance with schedules prescribed by the manufacturers and duty approved by the Director General of. Civil Aviation.

(f) The information is being collected from the Government of Punjab and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Conversion of Bangalore Airport into International Airport

371. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry have made s, request to HAL and Defence Ministry Cor permission to convert the Bangalore Airport into an International Airport;

(b) if so, whether the HAL and Def ence Ministry have accorded the neces sary permission;

(c) if not, what are the reasons for not according the permission when the Airport is already used by the Civil Aviation and International cargo carriers; and'

(d) whether Defence Ministry will be approached for permitting the Deptt, of Civil Aviation to convert Bangalore Airport as an International Airport?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOTTRTSM (SHRI I AM NABI AZAD): (a) to (c) No suck request has been made for conversion of Bangalore airport into international air-port.